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Tensions Spur U.S.-Soviet Military Comparisons

By Richard L. Strout
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The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

Which nation is stronger militarily—the United States or the Soviet Union?

Gen. Nathan F. Twining, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, says, "the U.S.A."

He thinks the United States is not only stronger at present but it should so continue through the 1960's "with concentrated effort and reason and proper courage and good judgment."

The new comparisons of strength are inevitable in the Cuban crisis.

A United Press dispatch from Moscow Sept. 25 quotes diplomatic sources there as considering the current crisis to be the most critical the world has faced since 1945.

Reports of a mood of pessimism unparalleled since World War II

in military strength, even if not expressed, is impulsive in diplomatic circles representing national potential. It is there if force is used.

The nation with the big stick is listened to. At present who has the bigger stick, the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R.?

Losing Lead

A report published by the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, Jan. 5, 1958, put the United States ahead. But this might not continue, it declared.

"It appears the United States is rapidly losing its lead over the U.S.S.R. in the military race. For perhaps the next two years we still possess a superiority in strategic striking power, and any Soviet attack on us would meet a crushing reply."

"The United States' position 'a year or two hence,' it said, depends on other matters. Unless present trends are reversed, the world balance of power will shift in favor of the Soviet bloc."

A second report compiled by a group whose original chairman was H. Rowan Galtier of the Ford Foundation has not been published. Details of it were loaned to the press, however. This followed a gathering at the residence of William C. Foster, former Undersecretary of Defense, called for the purpose of letting Vice-President Richard M. Nixon know what was considered to be a grave situation. The United States and the Soviet Union were put down as being equal in ballistic missiles as of the summer of 1957—13 months ago.

Reassuring View

President Johnson has taken a

October and November.

Of the broad seas picture

Eisenhower reported:

"I think overall we have reason to believe that we are not only stronger at present but it should so continue through the 1960's 'with concentrated effort and reason and proper courage and good judgment.'

The new comparisons of proper posture,

The Eisenhowers statement

came in connection with his

inauguration of the Special Air

Air Force Secretary for Inter-

national Gardner, Feb. 13, 1957.

Mr. Gardner resigned in protest

against what he considered

of weakness in the U.S. policy

missile program.

This year Lt. Gen. James M.

Gavin, chief of the Army's re-

search and development re-

signed. In his book "War and

Pace in the Space Age," pub-

lished last month, he declares:

"Furthermore, while it may

even now not be an intercon-

tinuous threat, the missile

years will have passed before we

have an ICBM capability of any

significance."

Mobile Log Period

In short, we are now entering a missile period in which the Soviets will have a steadily increasing ICBM striking capability which we will be unable to match for several years. We are in mortal danger and the missile log portends trouble of a serious nature."

Congressional opinion is di-

vided, but anxiety is evident.

Senate Administration spokesman Leverett Saltonstall, of

Massachusetts, a Democrat, ex-

plained to reporters at the close of

the Senate session the morning

of Sept. 12, 1958, that

Senator William Fulbright (D)

of Arkansas, on the other hand,

repeated the warning he origi-

nally made back on June 12,

1958.

The peril of the nation in-

creases daily because the way

the incoming administration

has dulled and continues to dull

the nation's alertness in in-

cluding its conventional forces

and its atomic forces.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev has called the

United States "a superpower

which is second to none in

its economic and military

strength."

Gen. Nathan F. Twining

is believed to be caught up with the United States lead.

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four times heavier than

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Senate preparedness subcommitt-

ee, Nov. 27, 1957, that United

States cities within 500 miles of

the coast were vulnerable to

bomb-carrying missiles that

could be launched from Soviet

submarines.

Space Hardware

Air United States jets num-

ber around 9,500; U.S.S.R.'s has

been projected to number more than

10,000. (United States strategy is

based on atomic, retaliatory

power of the Strategic Air Com-

mand's long-range bombers, a

portion of which are airborne

at all times.) The United States

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Nuclear power: The Soviet

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